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SUBJECT: UN POLITICAL HEAD BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL ON
MADAGASCAR

1. (SBU) SUMMARY. UN Political Affairs U/SYG Pascoe told the Security Council on April 7 that the international community must help push for a consensual outcome to the crisis in Madagascar. Ambassador DiCarlo said the power transfer was a coup, called for free, fair, and transparent elections within six months, and said the U.S. was suspending all assistance to the Government of Madagascar. Uganda said it would propose a Presidential Statement to condemn coups in Africa. Most Council members called for an earlier election timeline than the 19 months proposed by the interim presidency. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) U/SYG Lynn Pascoe told the Security Council in closed consultations on April 7 that the international community needs to push for a consensual outcome to the current political crisis in Madagascar. He said the African Union (AU) had just announced it will create an international contact group to address the situation in Madagascar. Pascoe said the April 2-3 "national dialogue," led by interim President Ravoelina's supporters, was boycotted by ousted President Ravalomanana's supporters, many diplomatic missions, and other political and civic groups. Pascoe delineated the new electoral timeline agreed during the "dialogue" as: September 2009 for the constitutional referendum; March 2010 for the legislative elections; October 2010 for the presidential elections; and 2011 for senate elections. Pascoe said that this plan, which delays presidential elections for 19 months, was much too long, and he called instead for presidential elections in 2009. DPA A/SYG Menkerios also participated and welcomed the leadership of the AU in addressing this crisis and urged Council members to look to address the root economic causes of the instability in Madagascar, which he said included a well-spread public perception of abuse of political and economic power by Ravalomanana.

3. (SBU) Ambassador DiCarlo condemned the way power was transferred from Ravalomanana to Rajoelina, labeling it a coup, and said the U.S. was suspending all assistance to the Government of Madagascar. She said Madagascar needs to restore constitutional governance and hold free, fair, and peaceful elections within six months. She also supported the UN's efforts, and welcomed the AU's formation of a contact group. All Council members agreed the power transfer violated the Malagasy constitution and all joined DiCarlo in calling for a consensual solution.

4. (SBU) Uganda supported the AU and Southern African Development Community's (SADC) condemnations of the unlawful change of power. Uganda also said it would propose a draft Presidential Statement (PRST) condemning coups in Africa (septel).

5. (SBU) Austria, Burkina Faso, France, Japan, Libya, Mexico, Turkey and the UK all reiterated DiCarlo's call for a more rapid election timeline. The UK said the power transfer was "tantamount to a coup."

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